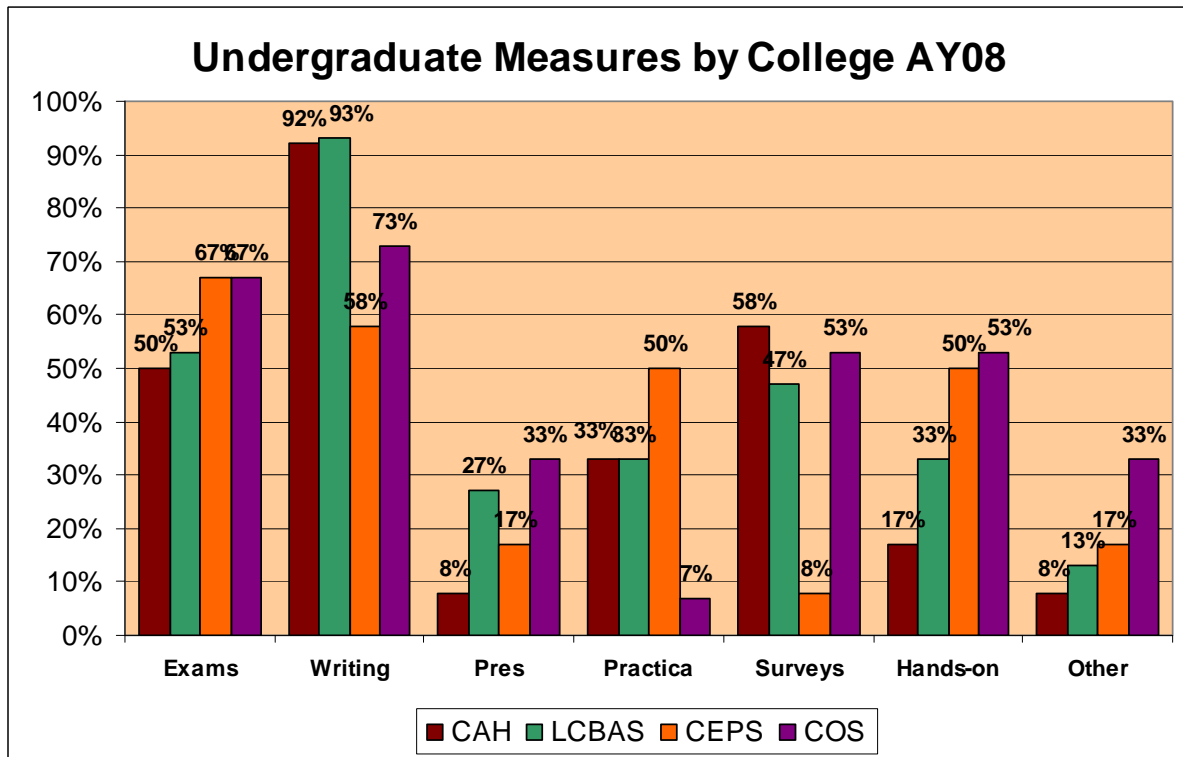


## Undergraduate Assessment Report AY08<sup>1</sup>

This report offers information concerning graduate program assessment at Eastern Illinois University. In AY08, 54 undergraduate programs submitted annual assessment plans to the Director of the Center for Academic Support and Achievement.

The following chart indicates how many undergraduate programs are using the various measures for assessment purposes. Charts listing the programs submitted and their assessment measures are given in Appendix A; individual assessment plans are available on the assessment web site at [www.eiu.edu/~assess](http://www.eiu.edu/~assess).

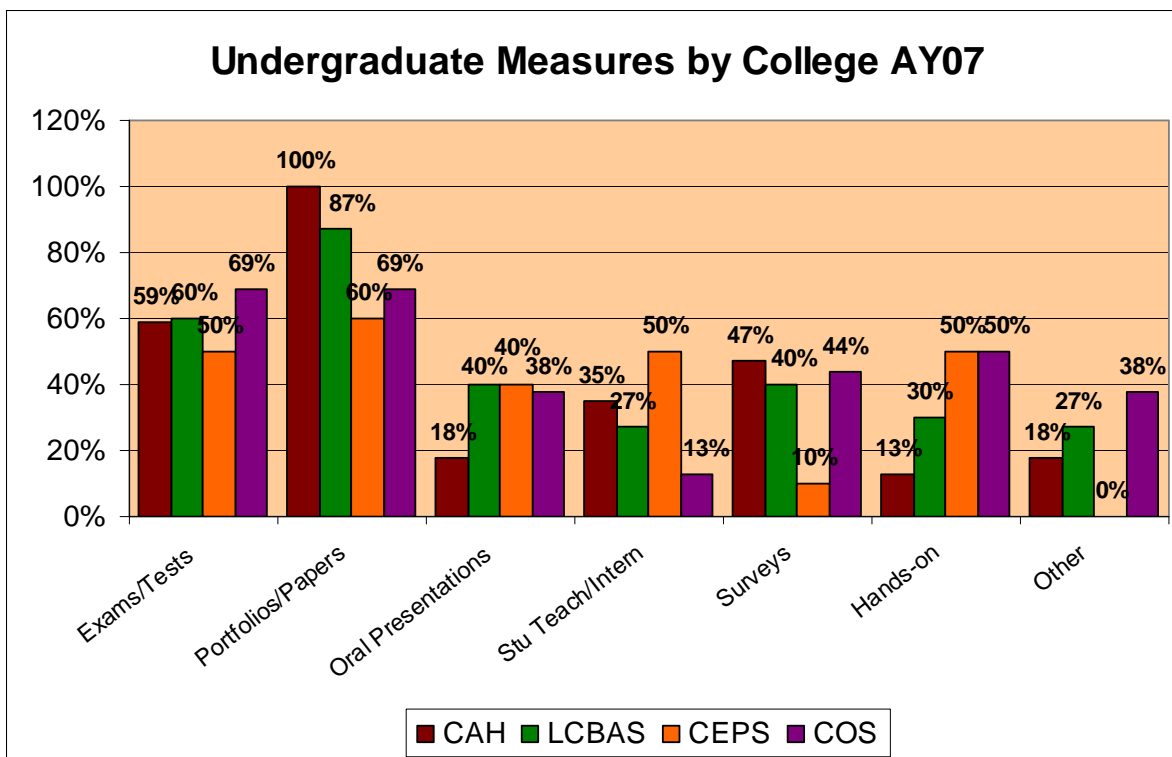


As indicated above more programs are using portfolios and papers than any other measure; exams and tests are the second most adopted direct measure. All of the reports submitted in this academic year had identified direct measures for assessing learning objectives with many programs choosing more than one direct measure. Indirect measures are still not employed by all programs, however. As the chart above indicates more programs in the College of Arts and Humanities are employing indirect measures than in the other colleges with the College of Education and Professional Studies using the fewest indirect measures. Since best practices in

<sup>1</sup> All information provided in this chart was taken from the annual assessment summaries submitted to the Director of CASA in Summer 2008 by July 25, 2008. Programs that have submitted plans in the past but did not submit this year were not included in 2008 data.

assessment call for multiple measures that include direct and indirect measures of student learning, some programs will need to adopt indirect measures before they reach level 3.<sup>2</sup>

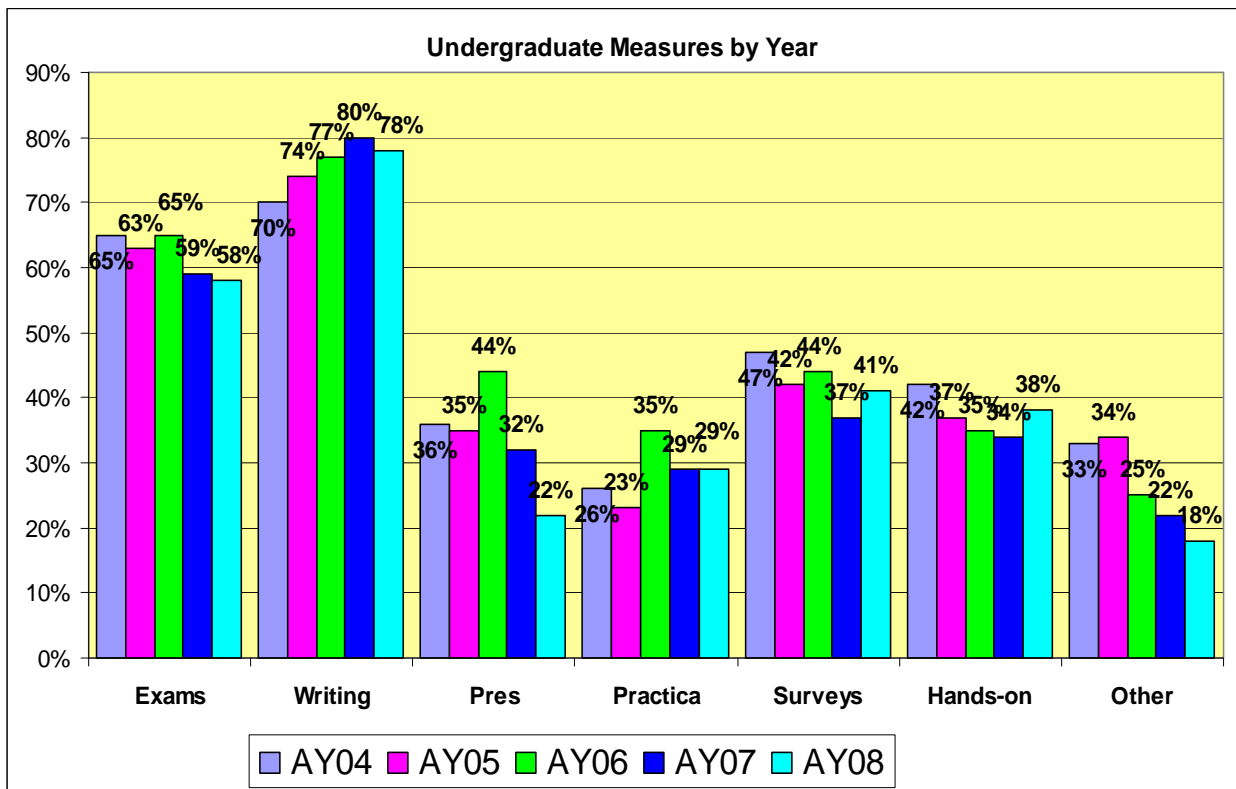
The chart below gives the measures adopted for AY07.



The use of exams and tests has increased in the College of Education and Professional Studies while the adoption of papers and portfolios has increased in programs in Lumpkin College of Business and Applied Sciences. The use of presentations as an assessment tool has dropped in each college this year: 10% in CAH; 13% in LCBAS; 23% in CEPS; and 5% in COS. The College of Sciences remains the college with the most programs using presentations as an assessment measure. This across the board drop in one year is troubling given the University goal of effective speaking; the following chart shows that use of presentations has been in a decline since AY06. Departments may believe that sufficient assessment is being conducted through the general education program, so have not embraced the use of presentations.

The following chart follows the changes in measures from AY04 to AY08 with all undergraduate programs submitted for each year included.

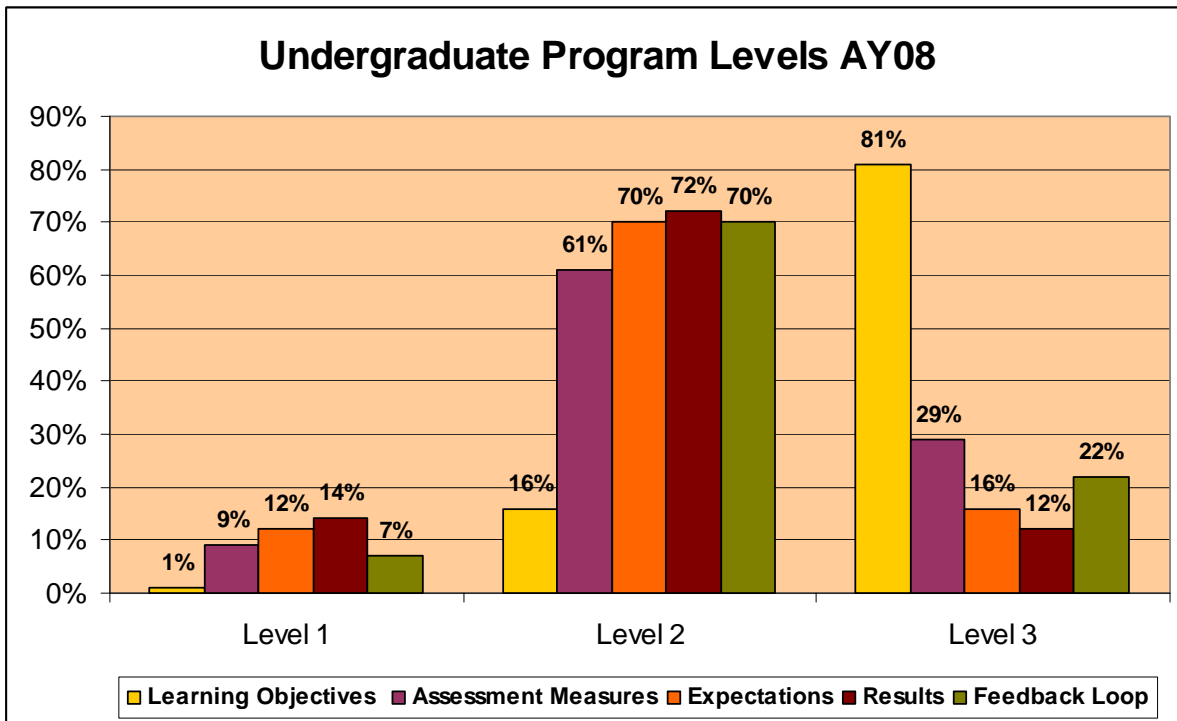
<sup>2</sup> The levels referred to here are the ones used by Eastern Illinois University since 2002 based on the Higher Learning Commission/ North Central Association's primary trait analysis. A copy of Eastern's matrix is available on-line at [www.eiu.edu/~assess](http://www.eiu.edu/~assess).



The “other” category in the above chart refers to a variety of measures that are either not measures assessing student learning outcomes directly (such as numbers of students receiving awards/scholarships, employment, research work w/ faculty, and number of students apply to and being accepted to graduate programs) or are very field/program-driven or are lacking in specificity (such as coursework, grades, and completion rates). The decrease in these measures is positive because it indicates that programs are adopting more specific measures of student learning outcomes rather than just using demographics. Programs are still tracking such important information, but are recognizing that such data provide little direct information related to the learning objectives themselves.

Papers and portfolios remain the most commonly used assessment measure. This popularity may be attributed in part to the University’s focus on effective writing and in part to the nature of college level work, which is largely dependent upon papers and projects. Many teacher certification programs are required to show student work before student teaching, so that contributes to the use of portfolios as well. The use of practica (student teaching, internships, field experiences) remains steady at around 30% of programs adopting this measure.

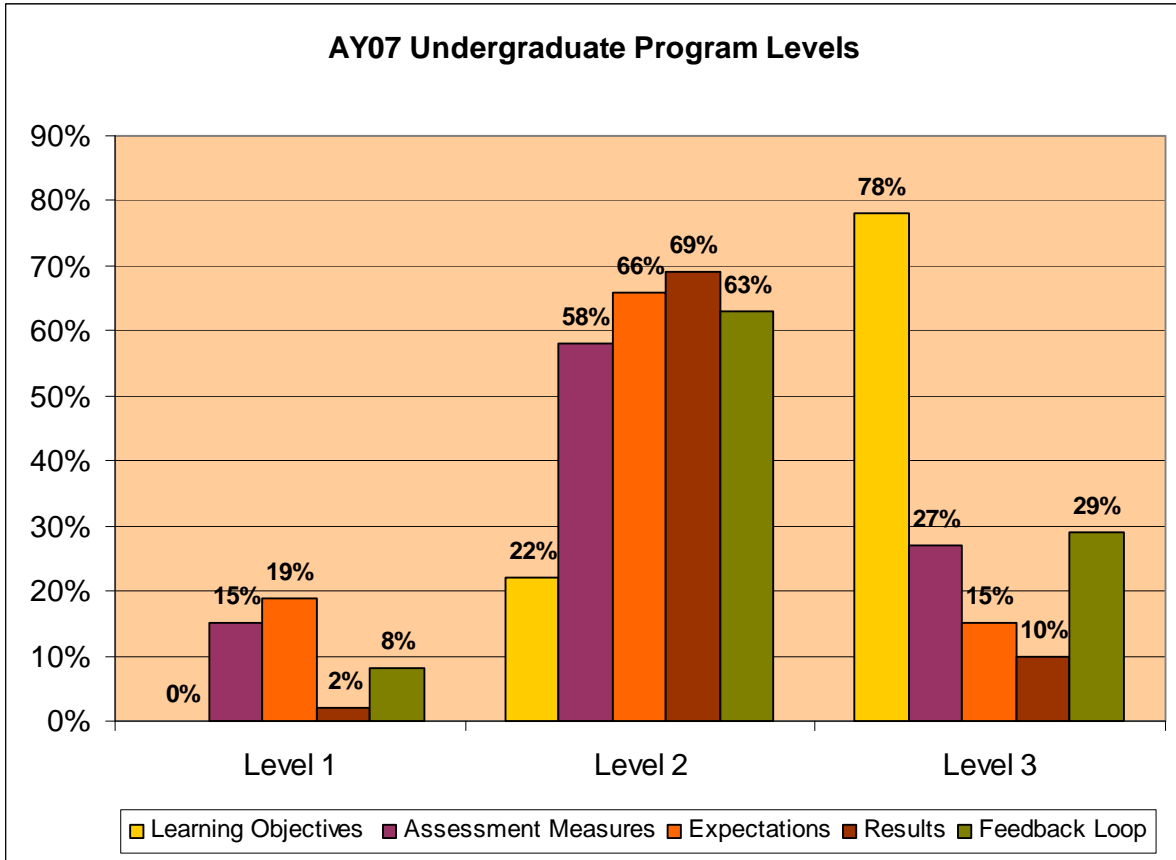
The following chart indicates the level of progress for the undergraduate programs by the five criteria on the primary trait analysis. These levels have been given to department chairs and coordinators on their 2008 Response to Summary Reports, which are also on the assessment web site.



While our goal is to move more programs into level three in all categories, each year there are fewer and fewer programs still at level one, which does show progress. This year the majority of programs were at level 3 for learning objectives. Only one program remains at level 1 in this category. Approximately 70% of programs are at level 2 for the rest of the categories with 22% at level 3 for the feedback loop and 29% for assessment measures. This indicates that measures have been chosen, expectations set, and results collected and shared, illustrating that steady progress has been made.

Below is the chart that shows progress from the AY07 submission reports. Comparing these two charts will illustrate what progress that has been made over the past academic year. In some cases, the number of programs at level 1 has increased from AY07 to AY08, which is not the progression we have seen in past years. This increase in level one for learning objectives and results is largely due to programs being revised or new programs launching. When a new program begins, or an existing program completes a major overhaul, new assessment measures must be chosen and it takes time to collect the data. This year, eight programs were at level one for results, and six of those programs were new or have had a major change in curriculum in the last two years.

Only five programs (9%) remain at level one for assessment measures; in most cases, this indicates that measures have not yet been determined for all objectives. The number of programs at level 1 for expectations has decreased this year with only seven programs in this category. All but one of those programs is in CEPS or LCBAS. Expectations for attainment of learning outcomes seem to be the most difficult category for professional and applied sciences. A chart listing progress by college is included as [Appendix B](#).

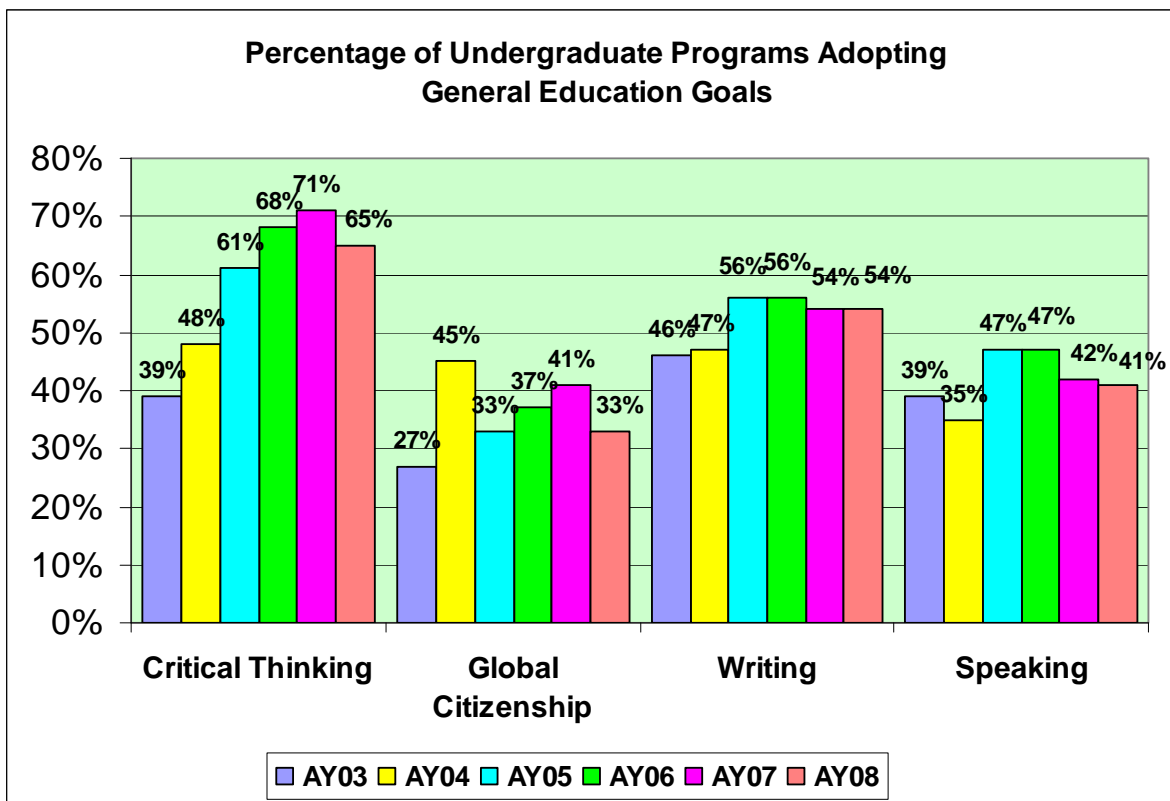


There has been a 7% jump from AY07 to AY08 in the percentage of programs at level three for the feedback loop. More specificity was found in this year's reports for this category and an increasing number of programs are incorporating sharing assessment data and discussing the use of such data into regular departmental and program committee meetings. Fewer programs are relying solely on the chair to do all the assessment work, which is a very positive step.

While the majority of programs and criteria are at level two, some small increases have been made at both levels two and three indicating a steady progression.

The best gauge of each program's progress as well as issues they are encountering is the analysis provided on the summary reports in Parts Two and Three. Several programs are making great progress at the undergraduate level, but others are lagging behind where they should be after several years of assessment work. Some minor programs express difficulty identifying students who are pursuing these programs. Several programs with majors that also offer minors are folding these programs together and gathering data from courses required for both the major and minor programs. Programs using standardized tests that are not required or a part of a particular course report concerns about student motivation and the validity of the data; others are concerned about the rising cost of standardized tests.

In addition to measures and progress levels, I have also tracked the number of programs that have adopted the general education goals in their major or minor program. The percentage of programs that have currently incorporated these goals into their program objectives is given in the chart below:<sup>3</sup>



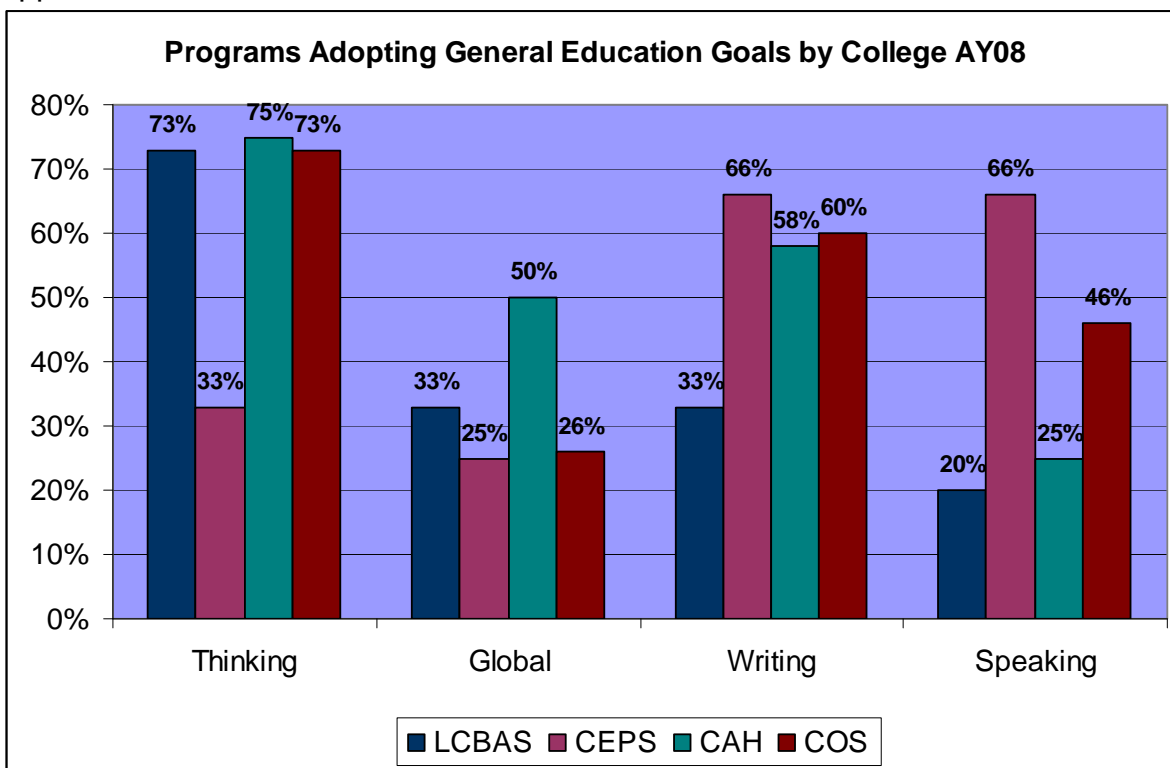
The adoption of critical thinking as an objective grew steadily through last year and then declined this year with a 6% decrease. Global citizenship also declined with an 8% drop this year. Global citizenship includes some objectives that are difficult to assess, such as ethics and appreciation of diversity. As a result, some programs have consciously omitted such objectives because of the difficulty of finding appropriate direct measures or because faculty do not find such content salient to their program. The decline in critical thinking objectives and global citizenship objectives is due in part to some programs that had adopted all four undergraduate learning goals not submitting reports this year. Of the 54 programs that submitted reports, only 3 (Accounting, Management, and FCS—Hospitality Management) had adopted all four undergraduate learning goals compared to eight programs in AY07. Seven (Art minor, English teacher certification, Safety and Driver Education minor, Physical Education—Sports Management, Clinical Laboratory Science, Career and Organizational Studies, FCS—Apparel and Textile Design, and FCS—Merchandising) of the 54 submitted programs had not adopted any of the undergraduate learning goals compared to six from AY07. For special programs and minors, this omission is understandable, but the lack of adoption of undergraduate

<sup>3</sup> These data are based on the assessment summaries and the Director's understanding of those summaries and CASL's definition of those goals.

learning goals by major programs is disturbing if the institution wants these goals to be included in all programs.

Writing and speaking are often grouped together in undergraduate program objectives, and they remain relatively constant over the past four years. However, little real progress is being made in the adoption of the undergraduate goals by major and minor programs. With fewer than 50% of programs adopting many of the goals, the NCA suggestion that these goals be assessed at the program level may be several years in the future.

The following chart shows adoption of undergraduate learning goals by college. A table showing each program's adoption of the undergraduate learning goals is in Appendix C.



Critical thinking objectives have been adopted in the 70<sup>th</sup> percentile by all but the College of Education and Professional Studies. CEPS, however, leads the colleges in the incorporation of speaking as a program goal with 66%; College of Science is second for this goal with 46%. With the exception of LCBAS, writing goals have been adopted by nearly 60% of the programs in the other colleges. The global citizenship goal shows the lowest adoption rate in three of the four colleges with the College of Arts and Humanities being the exception.